

## COMMUNICATIONS POLICY CANAL WAY ETNS

Canal Way Educate Together National School prides itself in having 'open communication' in the school. This policy was developed by the staff of Canal Way Educate Together National School in consultation with the School Manager. Its purpose is to provide information and guidelines to parents and teachers on parent/teacher meetings and parent/teacher communication in Canal Way ETNS.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Become actively involved in the school/parent association
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children
- Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos values and distinctive character
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them

### **Annual Communication / Events:**

- Meeting for parents of new Junior Infants & new class pupils in term three.
- Group parent/teacher meeting.
- Parent/teacher meetings one-to-one in November.
- Parents receive school report of each pupil at the end of each school year.
- Student conferencing.
- Meetings with parents whose children have special needs. Including involvement in the IEP process.

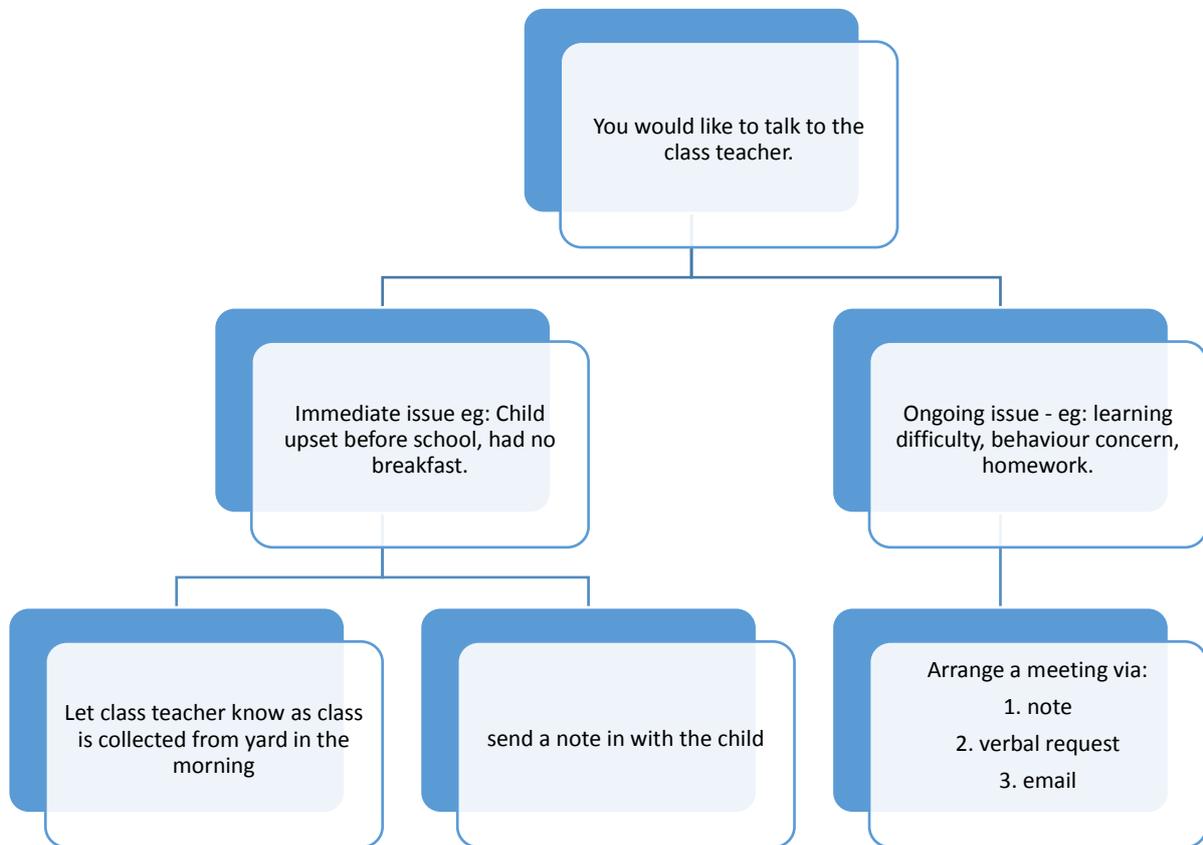
### **General Communication:**

- Consultation through-out the year.
- Meeting with parents to discuss behavioural / learning issues as required.
- Written communication.
- Through the Parent Teacher Association, parents will be invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of all school policies. Decisions taken to change current policies and procedures or to introduce new ones will be made known to all parents in written format via the school newsletter
- Weekly /fortnightly newsletters to keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays and school concerns.
- School website & Newsletters.

- Homework.
- Parents will be invited to Learn Together celebrations, Open days/evenings, class events to participate in weeks such as Maths Week/Green Week, school concerts etc

It is vital that the school is immediately informed if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to your child and therefore may adversely affect his/her education. In all matters pertaining to the wellbeing and education of pupils, only the parents/legal guardians named on the enrolment form will be consulted by the teachers.

## COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW



## INFORMAL PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS

Arranging parent/teacher meetings within the school day while children are in school is difficult. Parents are welcome to speak to the Principal or teacher(s) at an appointed time.

Meetings with the class teacher at the class door or in the yard while the children are assembling to discuss a child's concern/progress is discouraged on a number of grounds

- It is difficult to be discrete when so many children and parents are standing close by.
- It is not appropriate for a parent to discuss sensitive information at a classroom door or in the yard.
- Teaching and learning is affected.

Special Needs Assistants can chat about the activities during the school day or upcoming events but do not pass on information regarding child's educational progress or behavioural concerns. This will be handled by the teacher – ref SNA Policy.

### Urgent Meetings:

In an emergency situation, a parents may need to speak to a teacher urgently. The staff at Canal Way ETNS will do their best to facilitate where possible.

If a teacher needs to speak to a parent / caregiver urgently:

- Phone emergency number.
- At collection time (child unwell, incident at school)

### Ongoing Meetings (behavioural, learning, progress):

- Phone
- Email
- Request meeting

## FORMAL MEETINGS

Formal timetabled parent/teacher meetings usually take place in November. If a parent wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year to discuss their child, they may do so by prior appointment. This can be done by either

- Sending in a note to the class teacher.
- Speaking to the teacher briefly at drop off or pick up.
- Sending an email to the secretary.

When making the appointment, you must state the nature of your concern e.g. class work, behaviour related, personal. She/he will arrange a time where they can give you the time and privacy you may need.

## PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

These are held in November. The aim of these verbal meetings are:

- To establish and promote an on-going relationship and communication with parents.
- To let parents know how their children are progressing in school
- To facilitate teachers on how children are developing outside school
- To help teachers/parents get to know the children better as individuals
- To help children realise that home and school are working together

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

### Complaints Procedure – Educate Together, Education.ie & INTO.

#### *PARENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE*

*Complaints procedure agreed between Educate Together (and all other Irish primary management bodies) and the teachers union – INTO, last updated in July 2014, on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.*

#### **Introduction**

*Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the board of management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:*

- i. on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;*
- ii. frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school;*
- iii. complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.*

*Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in*

#### **Stage 1 of this procedure.**

##### **Stage 1**

*1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.*

*1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher*

*(s)he should approach the principal teacher with a view to resolving it.*

*1.3 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/ guardian should raise the matter with the chairperson of the board of management with a view to resolving it.*

### **Stage 2**

*2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the chairperson of the board of management.*

*2.2 The chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.*

### **Stage 3**

*3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:*

*(a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and*

*(b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.*

### **Stage 4**

*4.1 If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1 (b).*

*4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within 3 days of the Board meeting.*

*4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:*

*(a) The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;*

*(b) The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;*

*(c) The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;*

*(d) The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;*

*(e) The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and*

*(f) The meeting of the board of management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1 (b).*

### **Stage 5**

*5.1 When the Board has completed its investigation, the chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the Board.*

*5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.*

*5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years;*

*5.4 Primary School Management or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.*

*In this agreement 'days' means school days.*

#### RATIFICATION AND REVIEW

This plan was formally ratified by the School Manager on \_\_\_\_\_.

The plan will be implemented by the teachers and supported by the Board Of Management on 08.01.2014

It will be reviewed every 2 years.

Signed: Niamh Shine.                      08.01.2014

School Chairperson